Senate Unit Rejects Nixon Bid to Testify

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The Senate intelligence committee yesterday rejected former President Nixon's offer to grant it "an interview" and virtually ruled out the prospect of securing his testimony.

Chairman Frank Church (D-Idaho) told reporters that the committee found the restrictive conditions Nixon had laid down through his lawyers simply "unacceptable."

Although Church said the committee would request "further negotiations" with Nixon's lawyers, there was no indication that Nixon would change his mind. With the intelligence committee scheduled to wind up its work Feb. 29, Church said it would be futile to issue a subpoena that could be tied up in the courts for months.

"Years," interjected Sen. John G. Tower (R-Tex.).

Church pointed out that Nixon's insistence on being "interviewed" meant he would not be under oath. The former President also informed the committee that he would not entertain questions "related to decision-making" concerning the Central Intelligence Agency and other arms of the nation's intelligence community.

With those restrictions, Church said, Nixon would have been "in effective control" of any get-together. The former President had also offered to meet only with the ranking members of the committee and only if they went to his homs at San Clemente, Calif.